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# ENGINE/AIRFRAME RESPONSE EVALUATION OF THE AH - 64A HELICOPTER

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**NOVEMBER 1985** 

FINAL REPORT

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US ARMY AVIATION ENGINEERING FLIGHT ACTIVITY EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, CALIFORNIA 93523 - 5000

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An engineering evaluation of the AH-64A helicopter was conducted in Mesa, Arizona, on 3 October 1985. The US Army Aviation Engineering Flight Activity and the US Army Aviation Development Test Activity both participated in the test. The engine controls on the test aircraft had been modified to correct the poor engine/airframe response characteristics which had been reported as a deficiency on previous tests. The purpose of the evaluation was to verify that the modified engine controls had corrected the engine/airframe response.

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Maneuvers investigated included quick stops, pull-ups, pushovers, jump takeoffs, side flares, and recoveries from low power descents. The engine/airframe response of the AH-64A with the modified engine controls is satisfactory.  $\checkmark$ 

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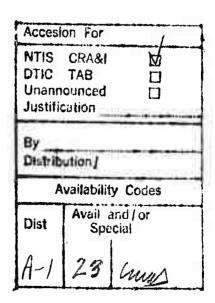
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This report has been reviewed and Distribution Statement A is correct. Per Mr. Woratschek, AAEFA





### INTRODUCTION

### BACKGROUND

1. The engine/airframe response of the AH-64A helicopter was severely degraded when the T700-GE-701 engines replaced the T700-GE-700 engines. Excessive rotor speed decay during power demands and subsequent airframe oscillations were listed as a deficiency in first article preproduction tests conducted by both the US Army Aviation Engineering Flight Activity (USAAEFA) and the US Army Aviation Development Test Activity (USAADTA). McDonnell Douglas Helicopter Company (MDHC), formerly Hughes Helicopters Incorporated, and General Electric have modified the engine controls to solve this problem. The USAAEFA and USAADTA tested an interim configuration of the modified controls in May 1985 (ref 1, app A) and determined that the engine/airframe response characteristics were improved but remained a deficiency. The US Army Aviation Systems Command requested USAAEFA (ref 2) and USAADTA to conduct an evaluation of the final configuration of the engine controls.

#### TEST OBJECTIVE

2. The objective of this test was to determine if the modified engine controls had corrected or improved the engine/airframe response.

#### DESCRIPTION

3. The test helicopter (USA S/N 82-23355) was the first production AH-64A Helicopter. It differed from a standard production AH-64A in that the weapons systems were not installed and the aircraft had instrumentation installed to record data for engineering evaluations. The standard AH-64A helicopter is described in reference 3, appendix A. Both the electronic control unit (ECU) and the hydromechanical unit engine controls were modified to correct the engine/airframe response. Additionally, a potentiometer was added to measure collective control position and send that signal to the ECU. These modified engine controls are further described in appendix B.

### TEST SCOPE

4. This evaluation was conducted at Mesa, Arizona, on 3 October 1985. Two flights were conducted for a total of 2.3 hours. An MDHC pilot was in the front cockpit for all tests. The USAAEFA and USAADTA pilots each flew cmc flight. The evaluation was

conducted within the limits of the airworthiness release (ref 4, app A). The aircraft was flown in the 8-HELLFIRE configuration with an engine start gross weight of 15,540 pounds with the longitudinal center of gravity at fuselage station 205.3. Tests were conducted at both field elevation (1387 feet) and 5000 feet pressure altitude.

### TEST METHODOLOGY

5. The AH-64A engine/airframe response characteristics were evaluated during performance of representative mission maneuvers. The test aircraft was stabilized at predetermined test conditions and baseline data were recorded. Specific test maneuvers are briefly discussed in the results and discussion section of this report. Flight test data were obtained from calibrated test instrumentation and were recorded on magnetic tape. Real time telemetry was used to monitor selected parameters throughout the test. A detailed listing of the test instrumentation is contained in appendix C. Test techniques and data analysis methods are described in appendix D. The Handling Qualities Rating Scale (HQRS) shown in appendix D was used to quantify pilot comments.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### **GENERAL**

6. The AH-64A helicopter was evaluated to determine engine/air-frame response characteristics resulting from a modified engine control system. Engine airframe response tests included jump takeoffs, side flares, nap-of-the earth (NOE) quick stops, power recovery from autorotation, and NOE ridgeline crossing maneuvers. The engine/airframe response characteristics of the AH-64A with the modified engine controls are satisfactory.

### ENGINE/AIRFRAME RESPONSE

- 7. Jump takeoffs were performed from the ground with the Hover Augmentation System engaged and initial collective control positions of full down and 40% from full down. Collective control was rapidly increased to 70% from full down (approximately 100% indicated engine torque). Side flare maneuvers were performed at 50 feet above ground level (AGL) and approximately 70 knots ground speed, terminating at a stable hover over a predetermined point. During both jump takeoffs and sideflares, the minimum rotor speed observed was 96.5% and the engine/airframe oscillations were well damped and not apparent to the pilot (figs. 1 and 2, app E). No warning lights were activated and the maneuvers were easily accomplished with satisfactory heading control.
- 8. Quick stop maneuvers were performed at 50 feet AGL with an entry speed of 80 KTAS over a paved runway (fig. 3). The maneuvers were terminated at a stable hover over a predetermined point. Both moderate and aggressive quick stops were accomplished. The minimum rotor speed observed was 97%. Residual engine/airframe oscillations were well damped and the aircraft heading could be easily maintained within + 3 degrees (HQRS 3).
- 9. Power recovery from autorotation was performed from stable 80 knots true airspeed (KTAS) descent (power levers at fly) with collective control positioned to maintain 1 to 5 percent split between the main rotor speed (N<sub>R</sub>) and the power turbine speed (N<sub>P</sub>). Collective control was increased to 60% from full down in 1 to 4 seconds during recovery. Power recoveries from autorotation (figs. 4 and 5, app E) resulted in the largest loss of rotor speed. However, the rotor speed droop was very predictable, in that larger and faster collective pulls resulted in larger magnitudes of rotor speed droop. Additionally, residual oscillations in engine torque were not large and were well damped. Residual airframe oscillations, observed during previous testing of the interim engine control configuration, were not present and heading control was easily maintained during the power recovery from autorotation.

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- 10. Ridgeline crossing maneuvers were performed at 100 ft AGL from initial airspeeds of 70, 90, 110 KTAS using synchronous collective and cyclic control which resulted in maximum rotor speed excursions of 95% to 111%. Residual airframe oscillations, observed during the previous testing of the interim engine control configuration, were not present and heading control was easily maintained during aggressive ridgeline crossing maneuvers (fig. 6).
- 11. Rotor speed droop in all the maneuvers tested was minimal to moderate and in all cases predictable (i.e., more aggressive maneuvers resulted in more droop). The engine/airframe oscillations seen during previous testing were well damped and of small magnitude. The engine/airframe response of the AH-64A with the modified engine controls is satisfactory.

### CONCLUSION

12. The engine/airframe response of the AH-64A with the modified engine controls is satisfactory (para 6).

### RECOMMENDATION

13. The AH-64A production configuration should incorporate production engine controls which provide the engine/airframe response characteristics exhibited by the test configuration.

# APPENDIX A. REFERENCES

- 1. Final Report, USAAEFA Project No. 85-08, Engine/Airframe Response Evaluation of the AH-64A Helicopter June 1985.
- 2. Letter, AVSCOM, AMSAV-ED, 5 September 1985, subject: AH-64 Main Rotor Speed Droop Improvements Flight Evaluation.
- 3. Technical Manual, TM 55-1520-238-10, Operator's Manual for Army AH-64 Helicopter, 28 June 1984, with change 1 dated 15 October 1985.
- 4. Letter, AVSCOM, AMSAV-PSA, 8 May 1985, subject: Contractor Flipt Release for AH-64A, S/N 82-23355, PV-01, Contract DAAK50-81-c-0001 and DAAJ09-85-C-A003.

### APPENDIX B. DESCRIPTION

#### GENERAL

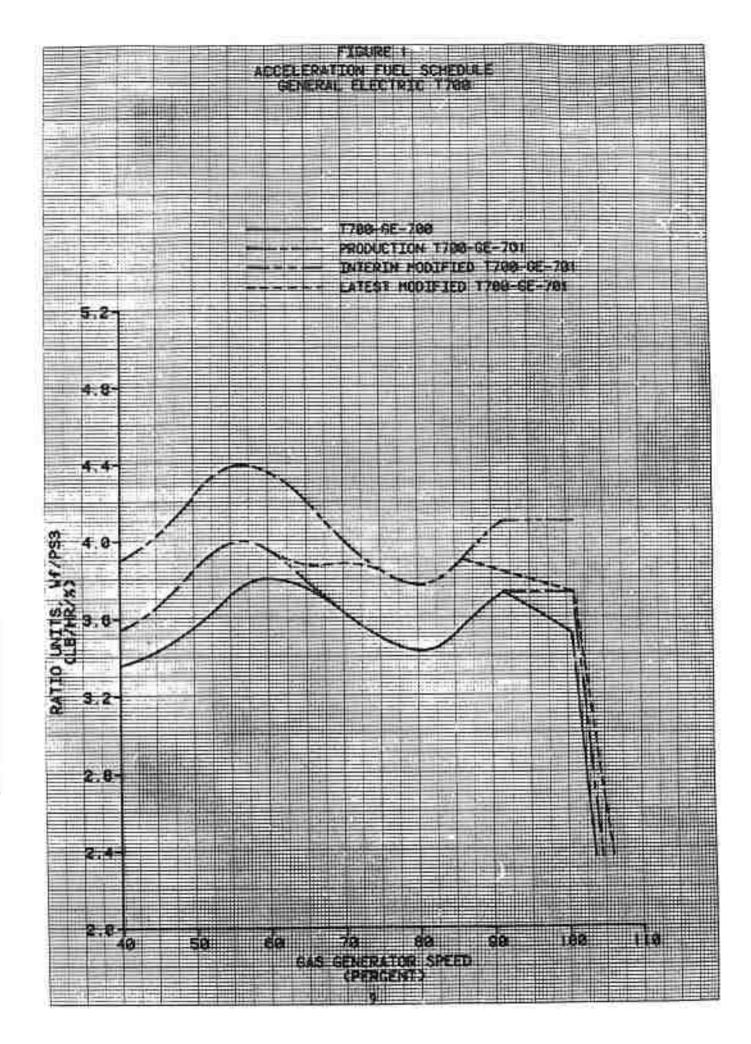
1. Three engine control configurations are described here:
1) the production T700-GE-701 controls which were used during the first article production tests; 2) the interim configuration (used during ref 1, app A testing), and 3) the latest configuration (used during this test).

### Hydromechanical Unit

2. The latest hydromechanical unit (HMU) was modified from the production HMU to increase the acceleration fuel schedule 10% between 70% and 87% gas generator speed (Ng). Above 87% Ng the fuel schedule was increased by less than 10%. There was no increase at less than 61% Ng (the engine start range). Figure 1 presents the acceleration fuel schedule for the production HMU, the interim HMU (used during the ref l testing), and the HMU used during this test.

### Electrical Control Unit

- 3. The gain of the power turbine speed (Np) governor in the production electrical control unit (ECU) switched from high to low as engine torque decreased below 20 ft-lb. Approximately one second after torque increased through 20 ft-lb, the gain switched back to high. In the interim ECU, this switching occurred at 50 ft-lb. On both of these ECU's, if the Np governor gain was low as Np increased through 112%, the gain switched to high with no delay. On the latest ECU, the high to low gain switching occurred as engine torque decreased through 50 ft-lb. On the ECU used during this test, the low to high gain switching occurred approximately 1/2 second after engine torque increased through 50 ft-lb or immediately when Np reached 107%.
- 4. Both the interim and latest ECU incorporated a collective control rate-of-movement signal to increase fuel flow with upward collective control movement. One volt per %/second of collective control movement was sent from the potentiometer to the ECU. The maximum signal was 2.5 volts in the interim ECU and 1.5 volts in the latest one.
- 5. There were two additional differences between the interim and latest ECU's. The first was the incorporation of a "notch" filter in the latest ECU to eliminate signals at approximately 2.7 Hz. This was to eliminate an engine/rotor system dynamic instability which had been encountered during contractor testing. Incorporation of the "notch" filter allowed a gain change to be made in the governor dynamics to improve damping of oscillations at



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approximately 0.4 Hz without reducing damping at 2.7 Hz. This gain change was made to eliminate the residual engine/airframe oscillations found during previous tests. The gain was changed from 0.135 (production and interim value) to 0.0425. A schematic of the latest ECU configuration is shown in figure 2.

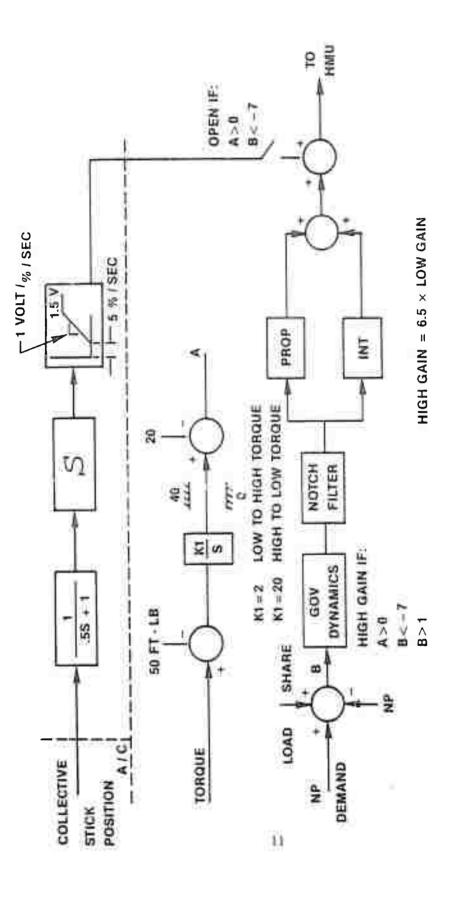


Figure 2. AH-64A Engine Control Schematic

### APPENDIX C. INSTRUMENTATION

- l. An airborne data acquisition system was installed and maintained by McDonnell Douglas. The system utilized pulse code modulation (PCM) encoding. Magnetic tape was used to record parameters aboard the aircraft.
- 2. A boom was mounted on the aircraft extending 52 inches forward of the nose. A pitot-static tube, an angle-of-attack sensor, and an angle-of-sideslip sensor were mounted on the boom.
- 3. Instrumentation and related special equipment installed are presented in the following lists.

### Pilot Station (aft cockpit displays)

```
Pressure altitude (boom)
Airspeed (boom)
Vertical rate of climb
Main rotor speed
Engine torque (both engines)
Engine measured gas temperature (both engines)
Engine power turbine speed (both engines)
Engine gas generator speed (both engines)
Angle of sideslip
Event switch
Radar altitude
Control Positions
    Longitudinal
    Lateral
    Directional
    Collective
Stabilator incidence angle
Normal acceleration (cg)
Horizontal situation indicator with Doppler interface
Primary attitude reference
Turn needle and ball
CG lateral acceleration (sensitive indicator)
```

### Copilot Station Displays

```
Airspeed (ship)
Altitude (ship)
Main rotor speed
Engine torque (both engines)
Engine measured gas temperature (both engines)
Engine gas generator speed (both engines)
Fuel used (both engines)
Total air temperature
Time code display
```

Event switch
Data system controls
Doppler

### PCM Parameters (Magnetic Tape)

Time code Event Main rotor speed Fuel temperature (both engines) Fuel used (both engines) Engine fuel flow (both engines) Engine torque (both engines) Engine measured gas temperature (both engines) Engine gas generator speed (both engines) Engine power turbine speed (both engines) Airspeed (boom) Airspeed (ship, pilot and copilot/gunner) Altitude (boom) Altitude (ship, pilot and copilot/gunner) Total air temperature Angle of attack (boom) Angle of sideslip (boom) Control positions Longitudinal cyclic Lateral cyclic Pedal Collective Stabilator incidence angle Aircraft attitudes Pitch Rol1 Yaw Aircraft angular velocities Pitch Roll Yaw Vibration Accelerometers Pilot seat (3 axes) Copilot seat (3 axes) Aircraft cg (3 axes) Stability augmentation system actuator positions Longitudinal Lateral Directional Control actuator positions Collective pitch Cyclic pitch

Cyclic roll
Tail rotor
Air data system
Longitudinal velocity
Lateral velocity
Pressure altitude
Outside air temperature
Angle of sideslip
Resultant airspeed
Radar altitude
CG normal acceleration
CG lateral acceleration
Rotor azimuth

# APPENDIX D. TEST TECHNIQUES AND DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

### GENERAL

1. The test techniques used during this evaluation are described in the Results and Discussion section of this report. Pilot comments on the workload required to accomplish the maneuvers were quantified using a modified Cooper-Harper Handling Qualities Rating Scale (fig. 1).

### DEFINITIONS

2. The following definition of deficiency was used during this evaluation.

Deficiency - A defect or malfunction discovered during the life cycle of an item of equipment that constitutes a safety hazard to personnel; will result in serious damage to the equipment if operation is continued; or indicates improper design or other cause of failure of an item or part, which seriously impairs the equipment's operational capability.

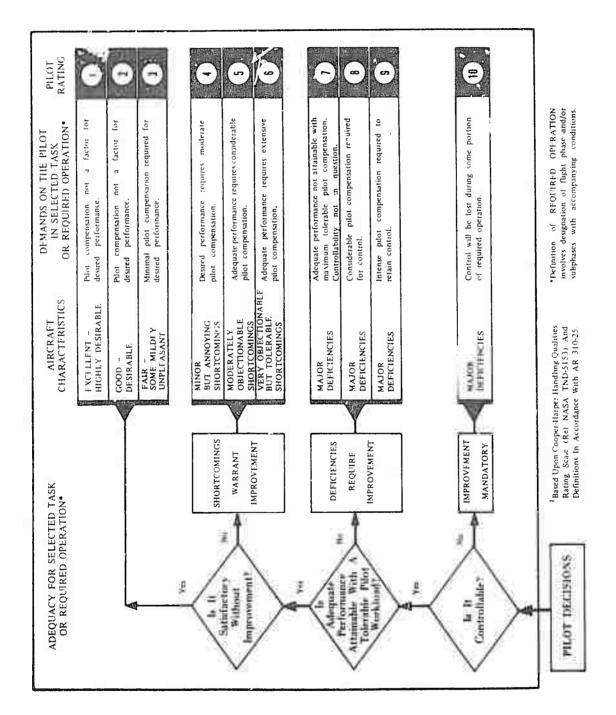
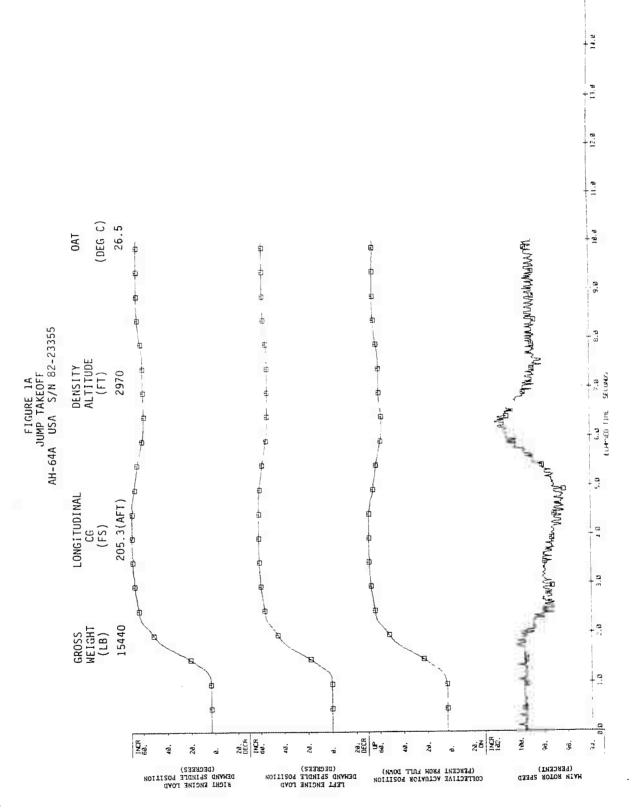


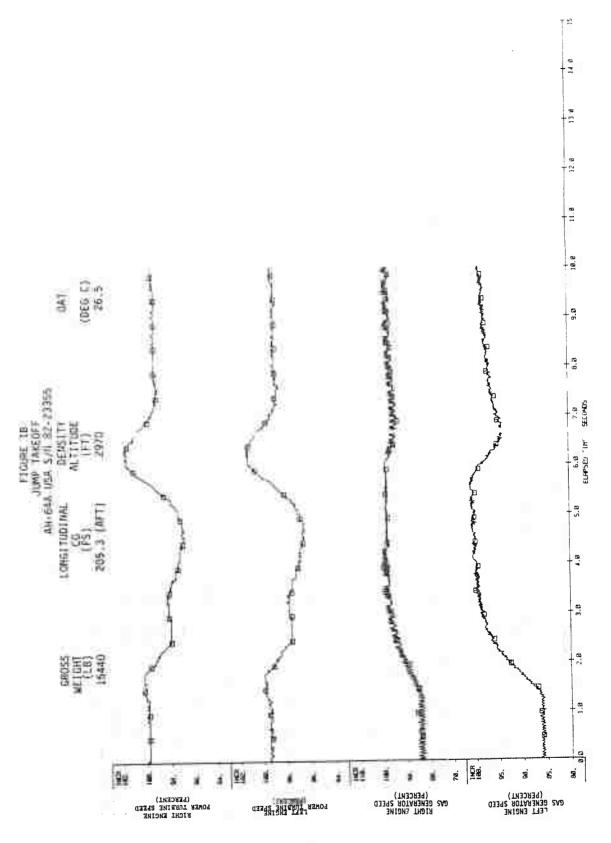
Figure 1. Handling Qualities Rating Scale

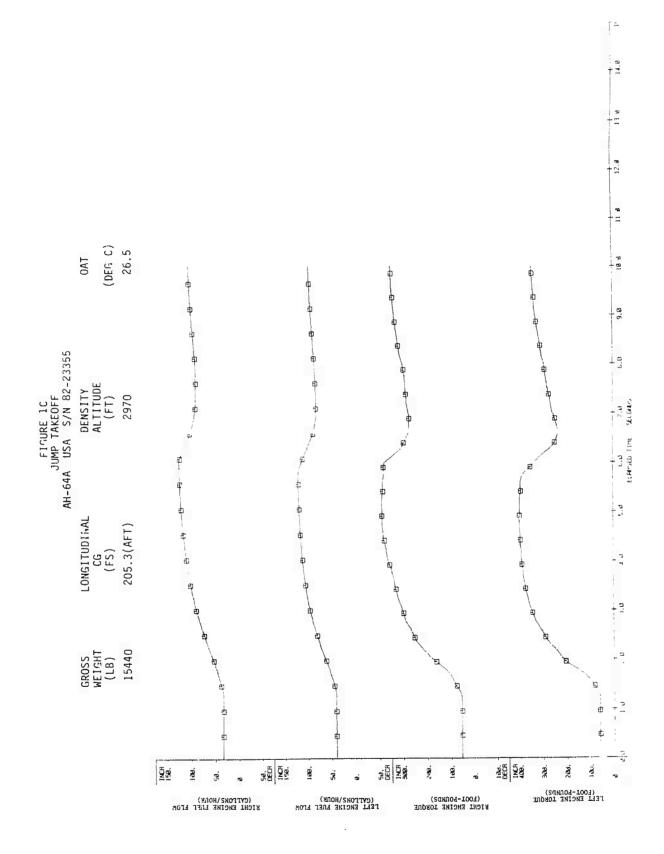
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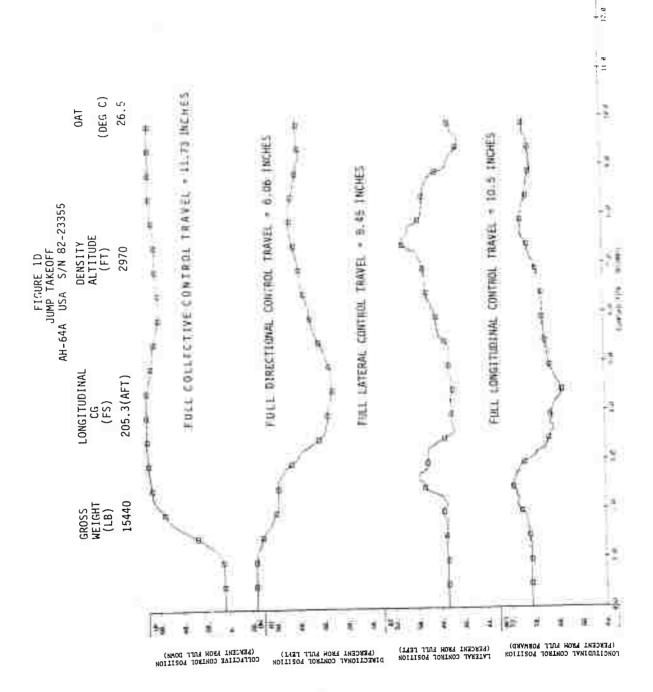
## APPENDIX E. TEST DATA

Figure	Figure Number
Jump Takeoff Sideflare Quick Stop Recovery from Autorotation	1A - 1F 2A - 2F 3A - 3F 4A - 4F, 5A - 5F 6A - 6F
Ridgeline Maneuver	0A - 0r

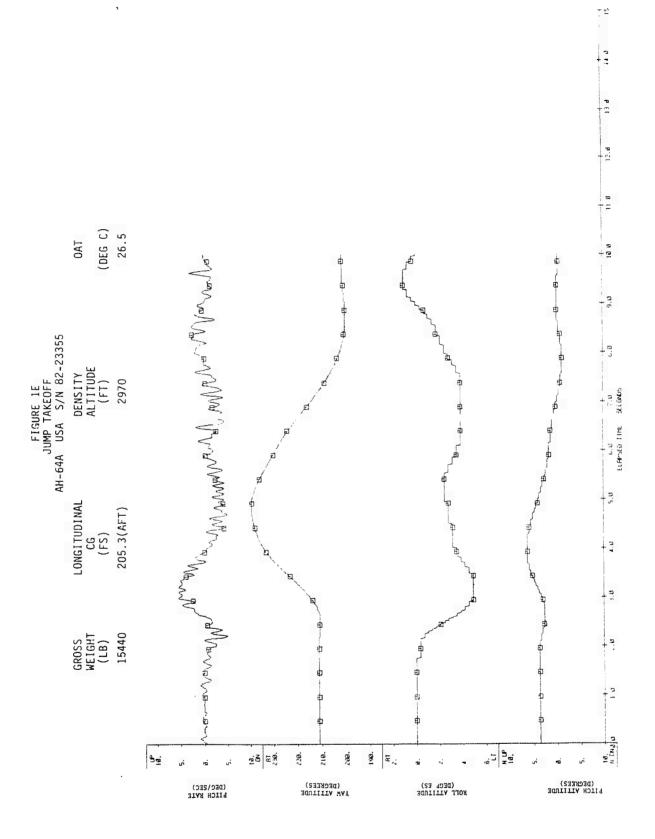


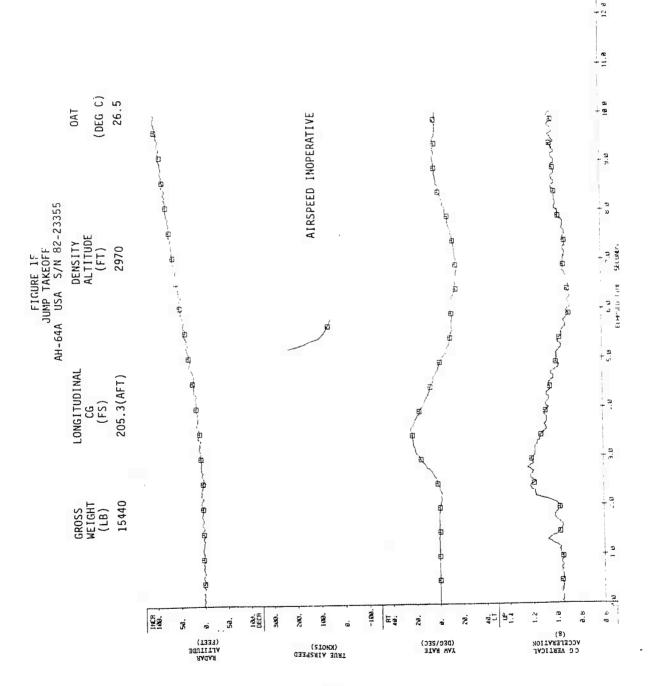


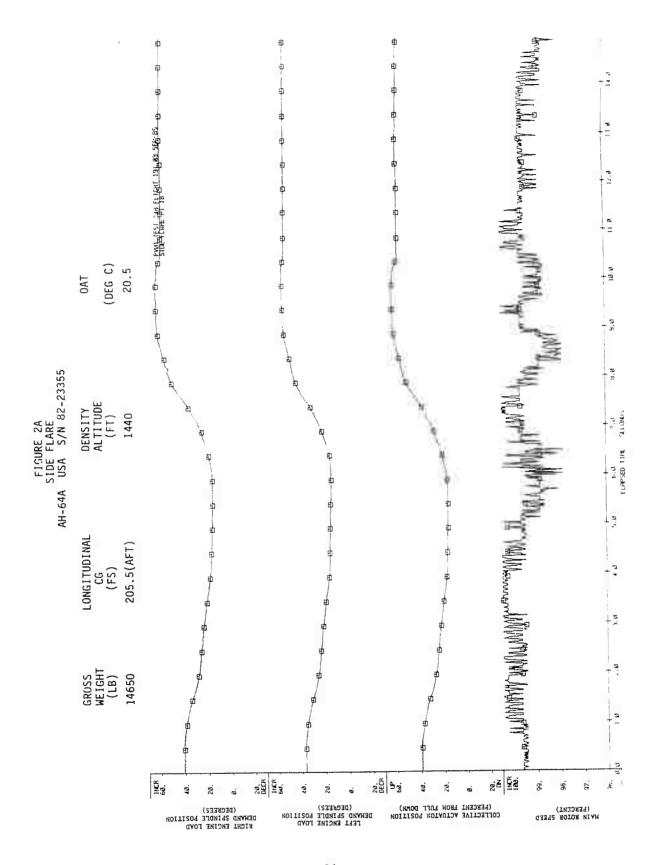


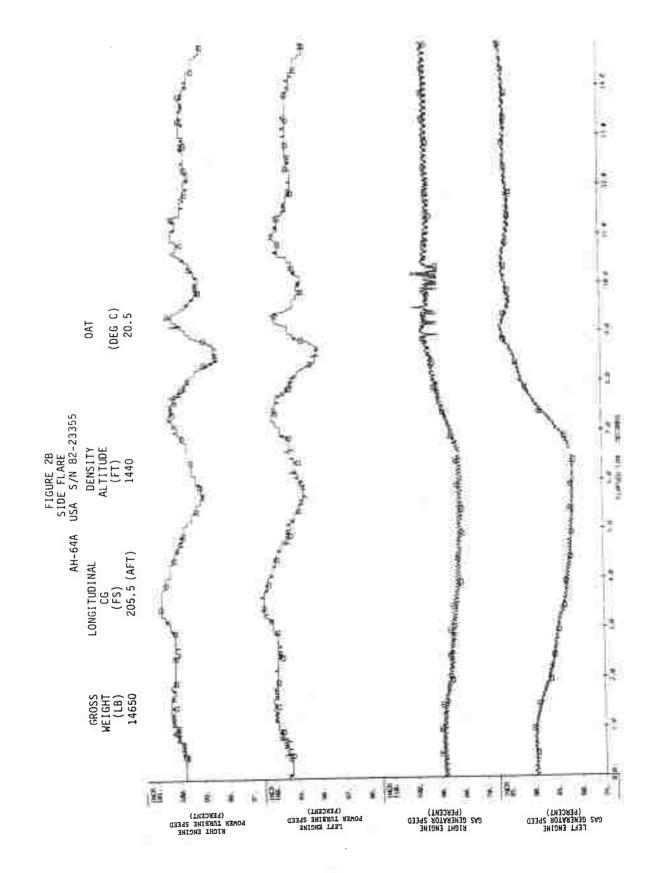


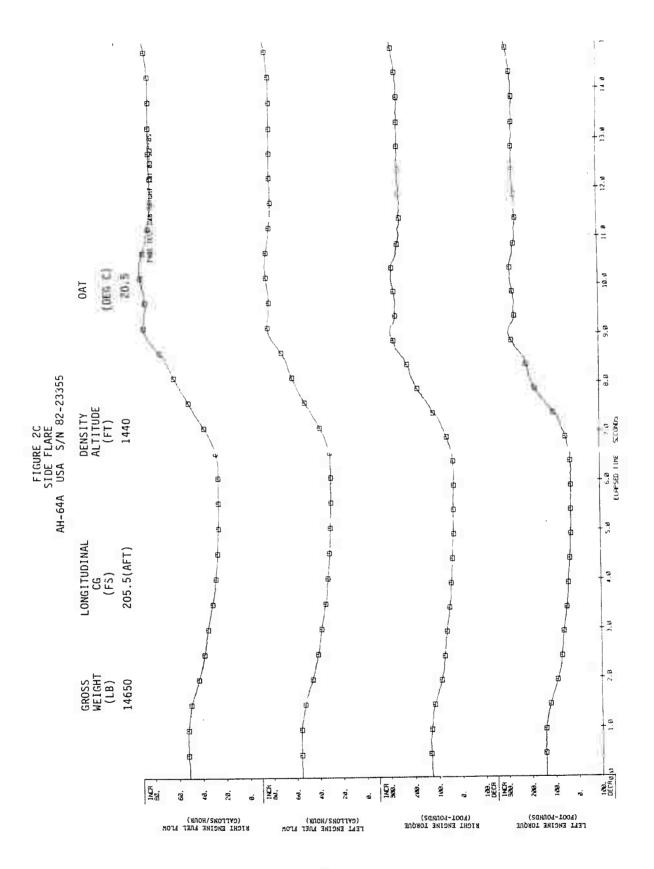
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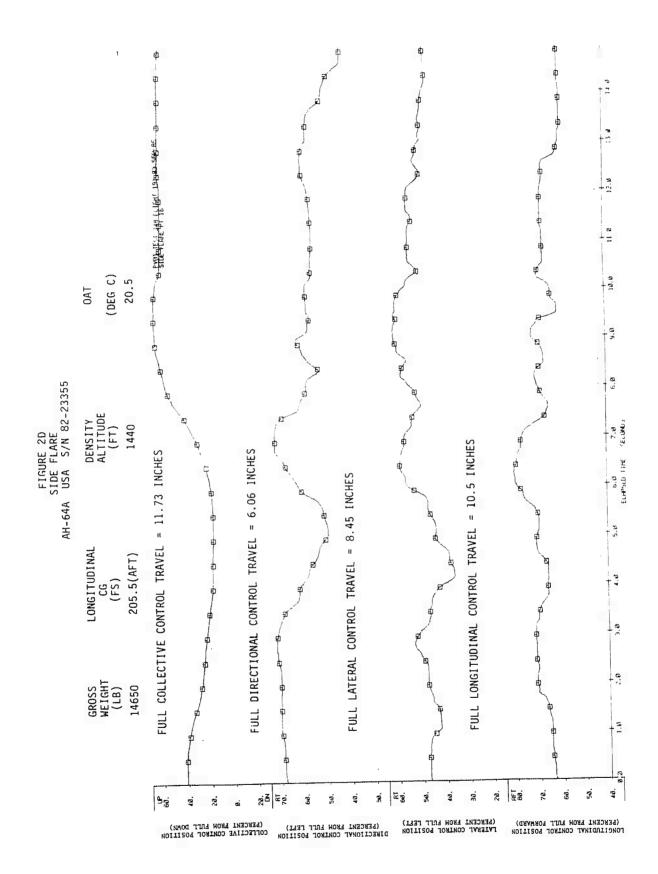


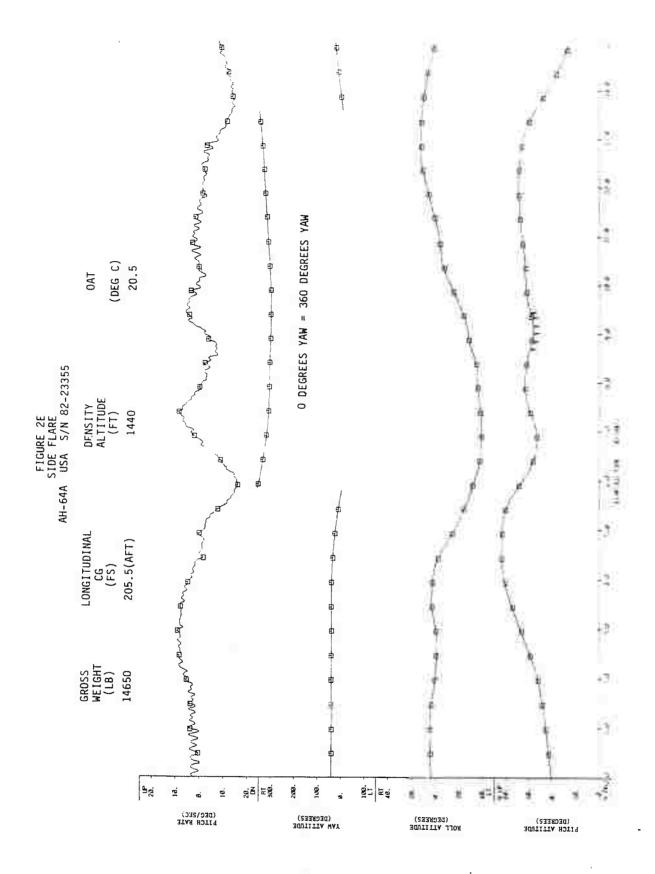


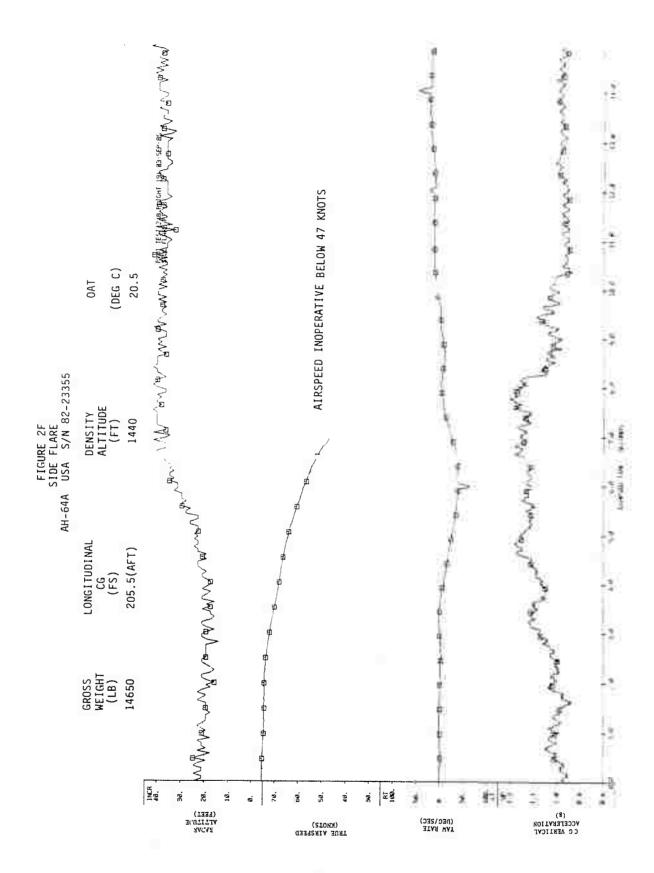


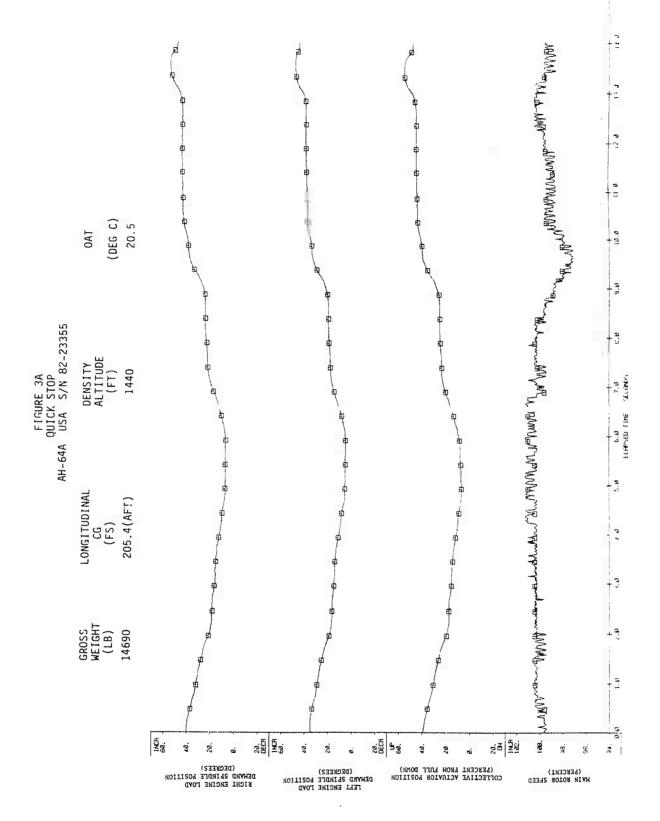


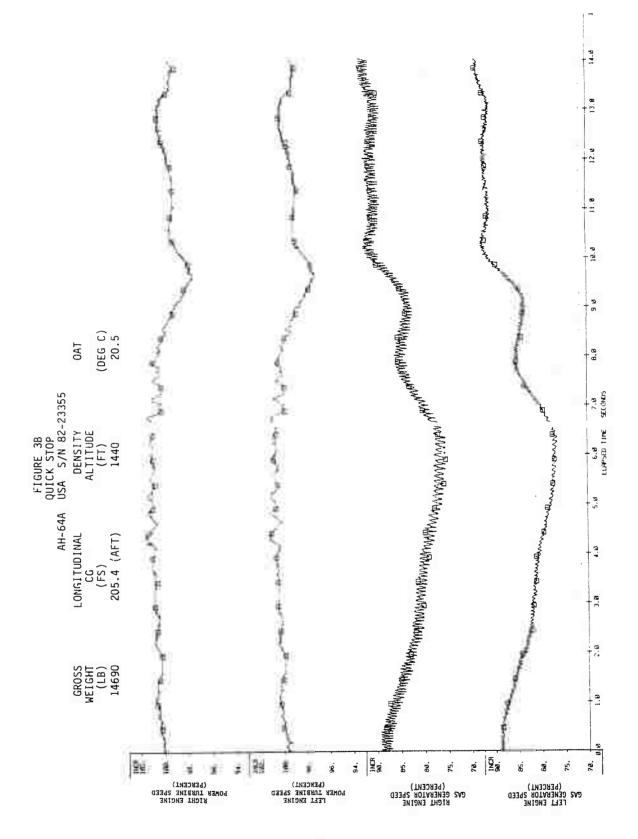


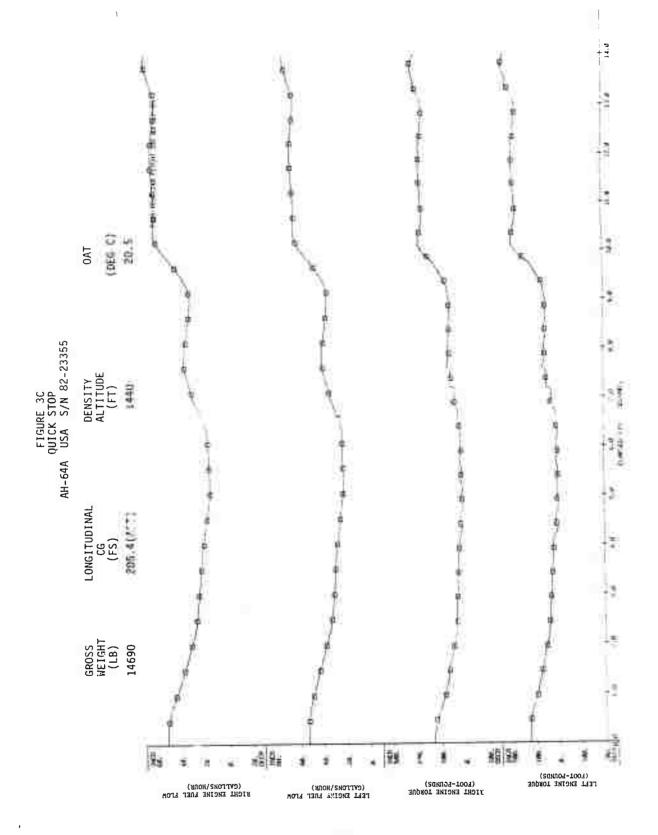


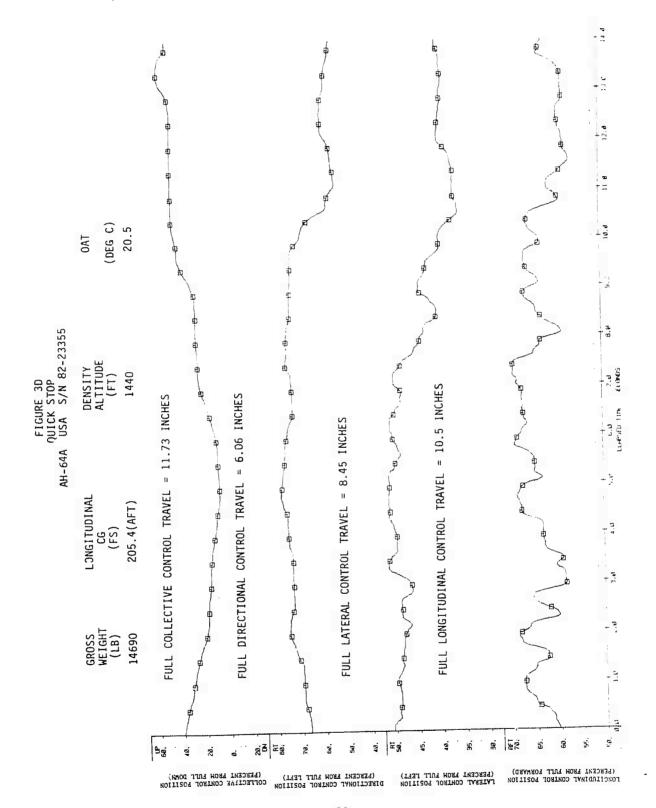


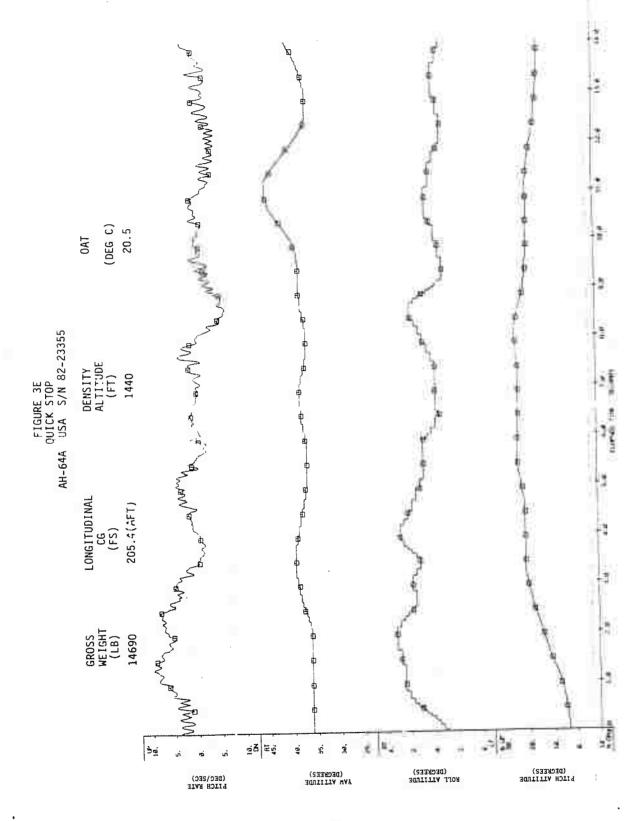


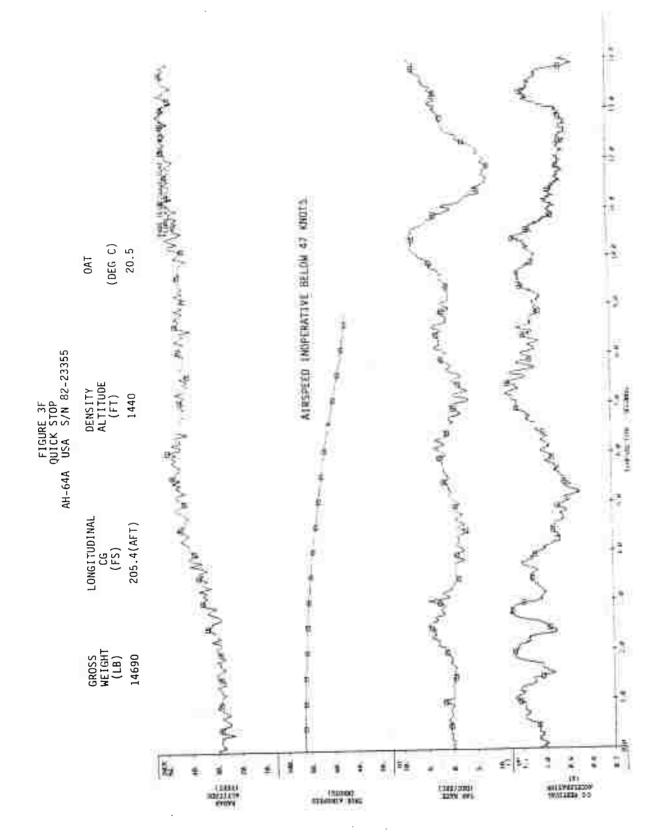




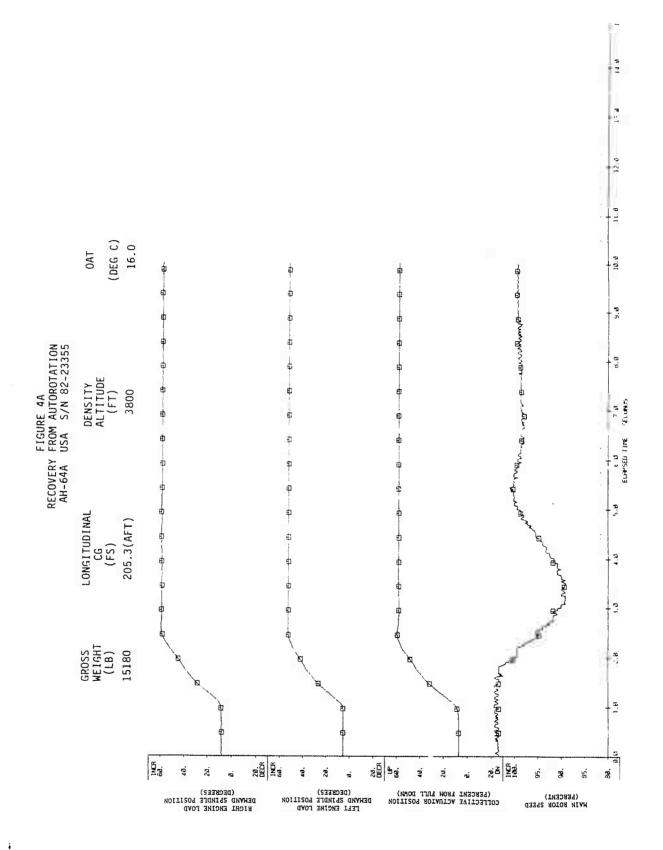


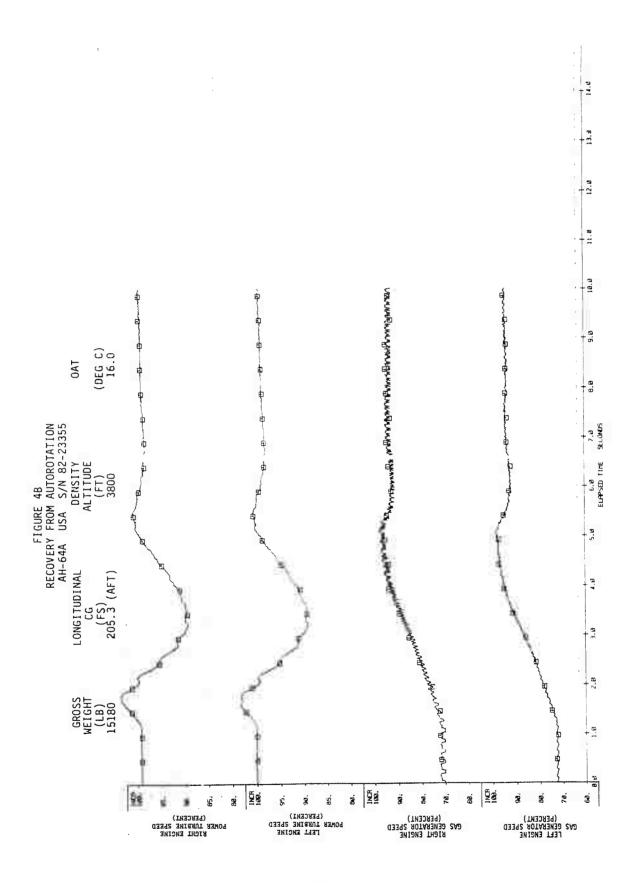


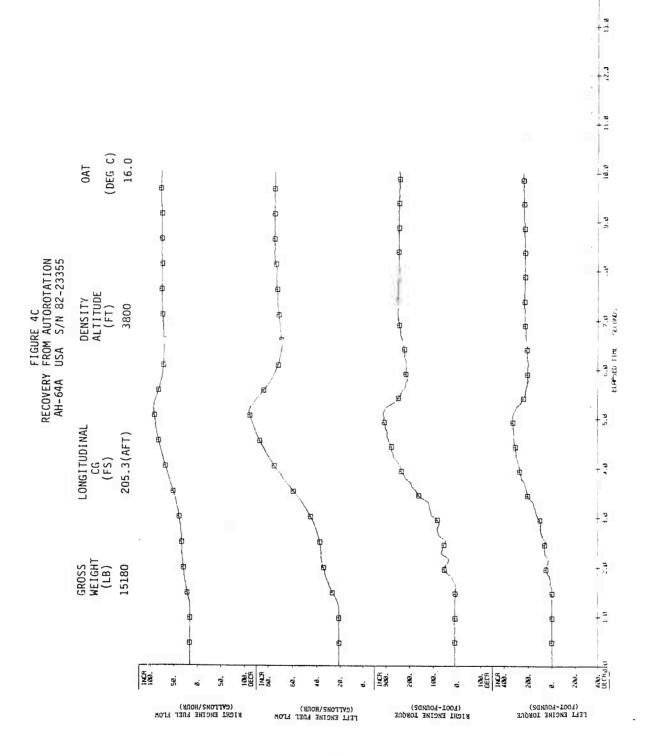


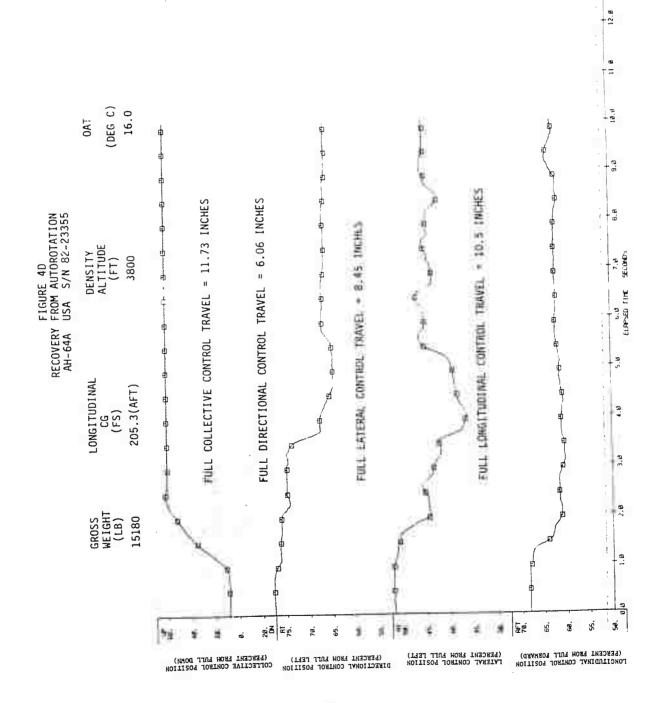


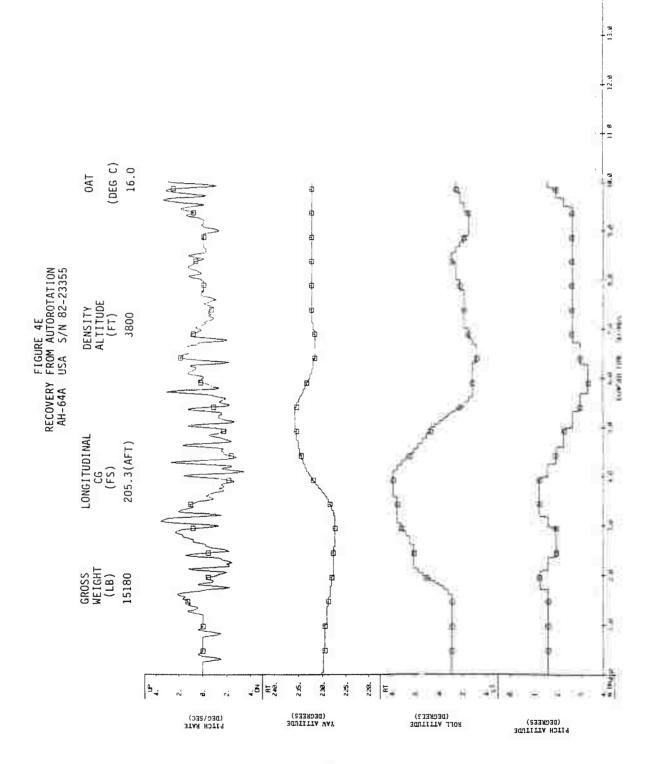
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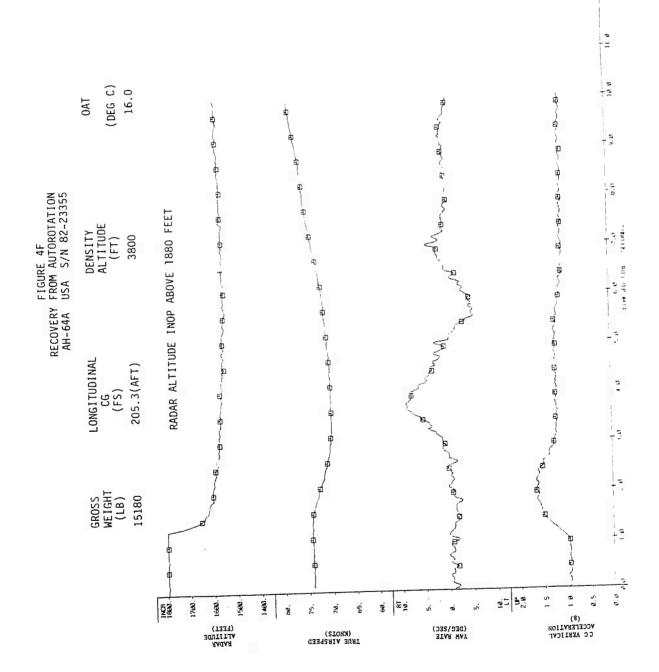


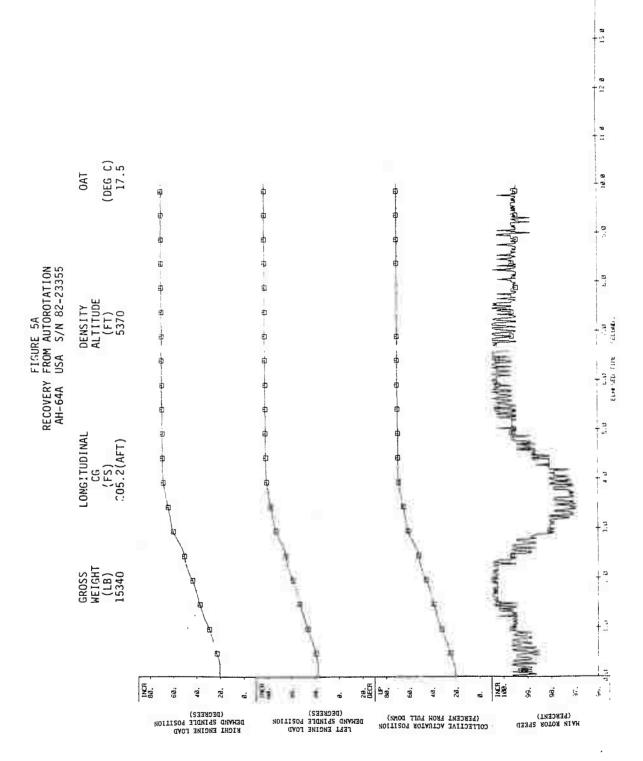




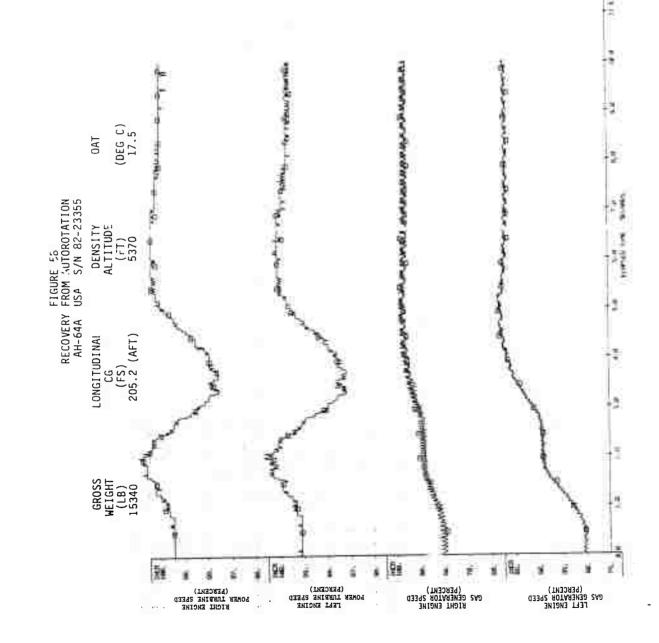


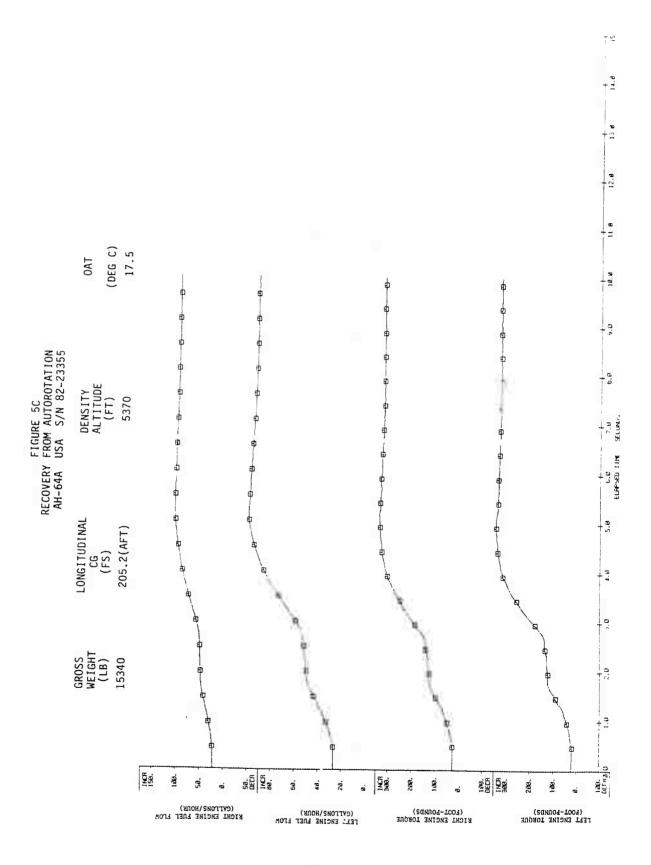


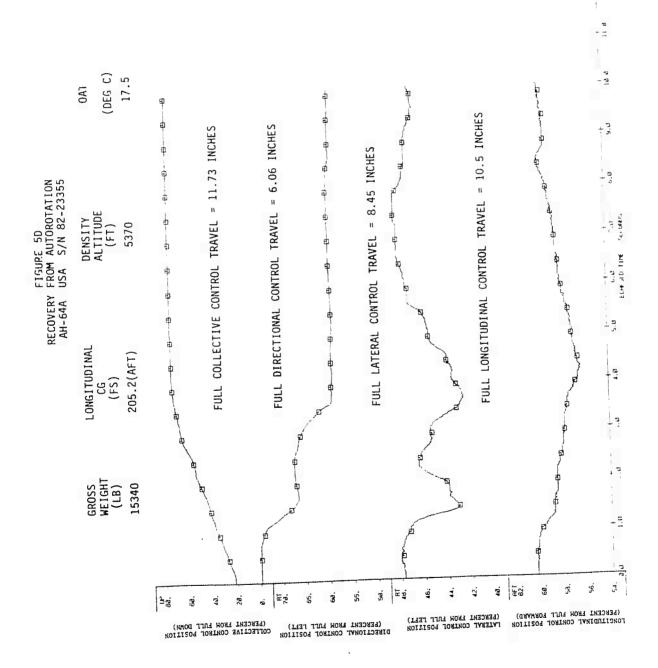




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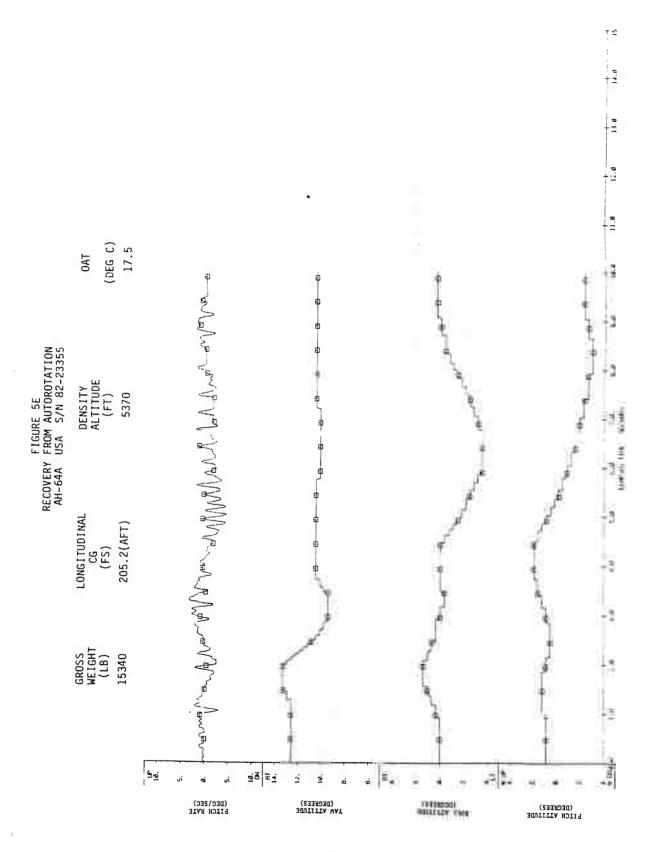


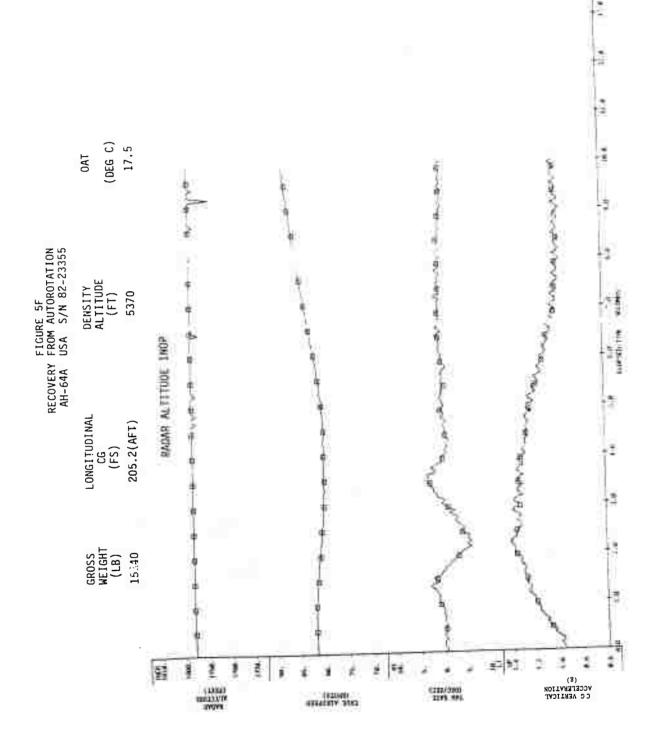


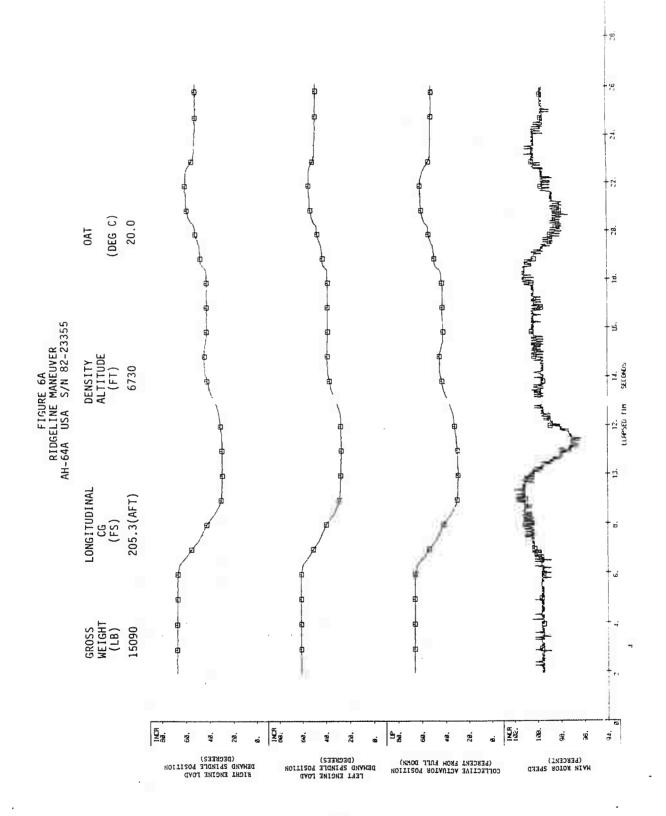


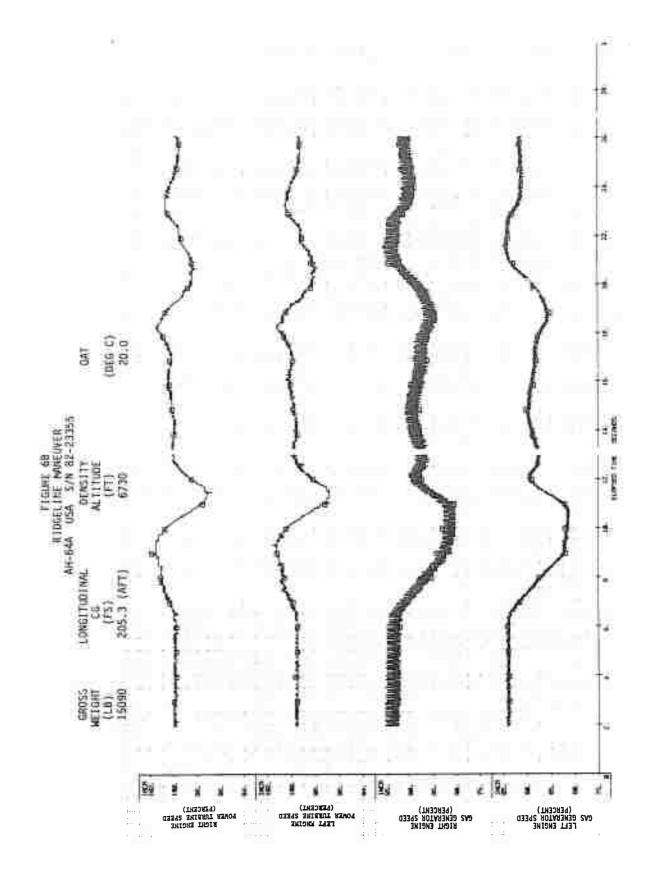
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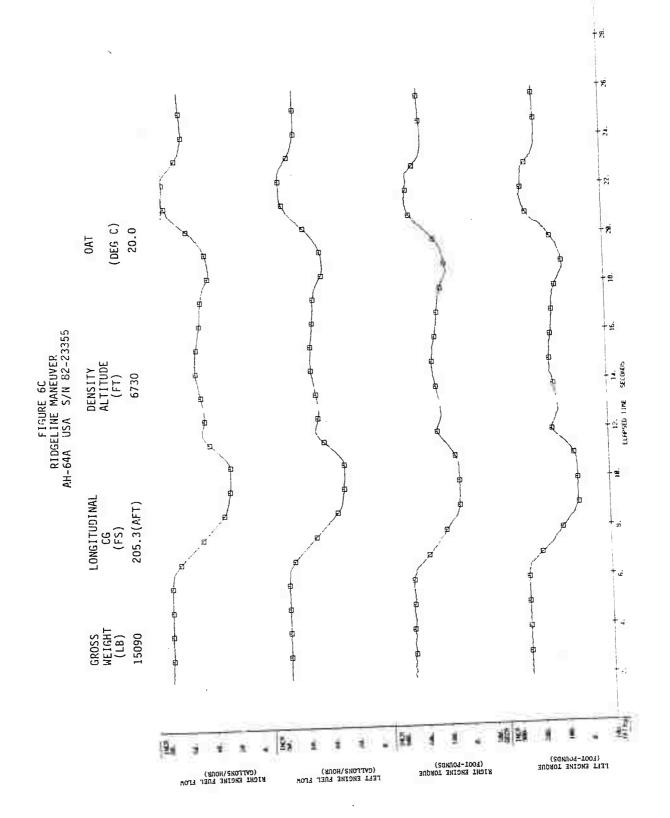
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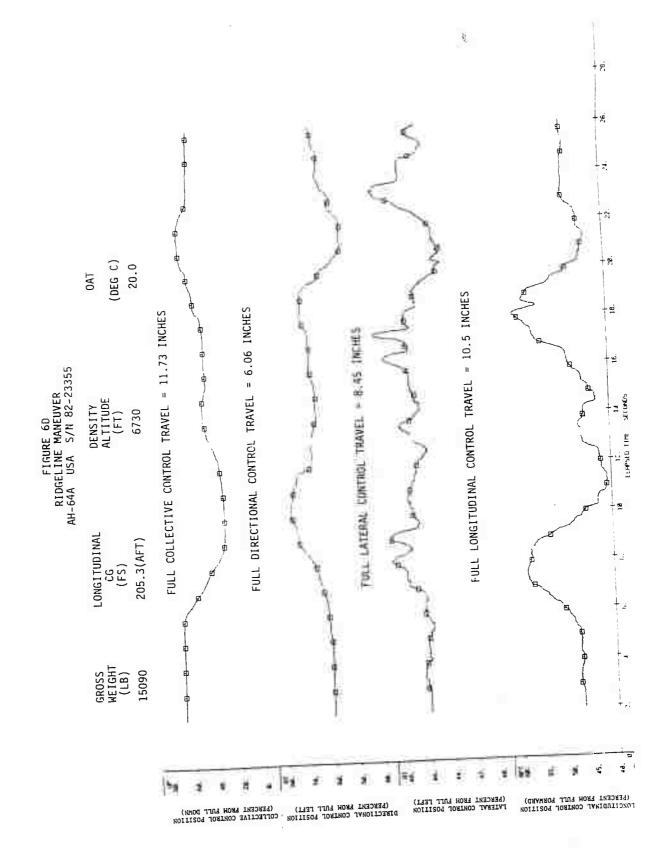


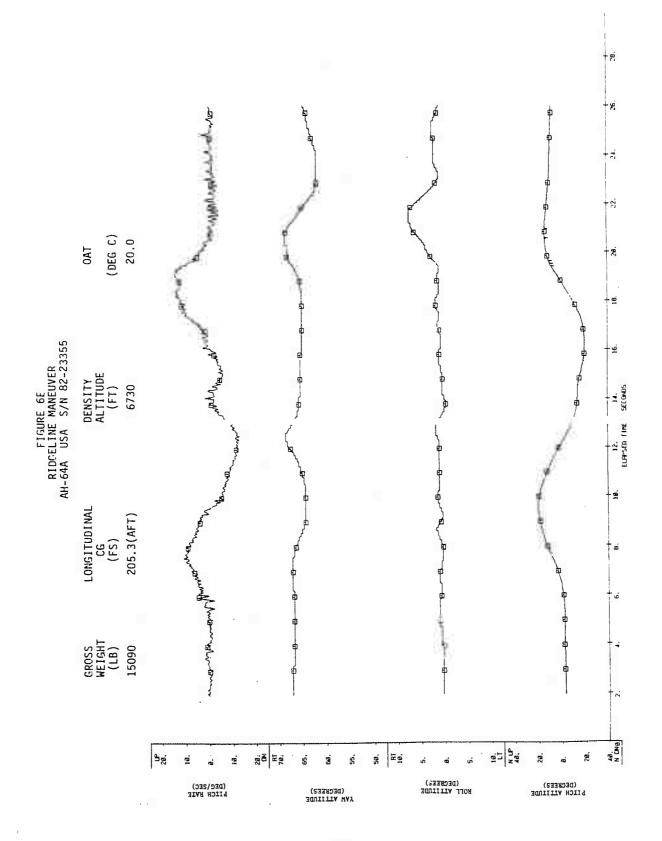


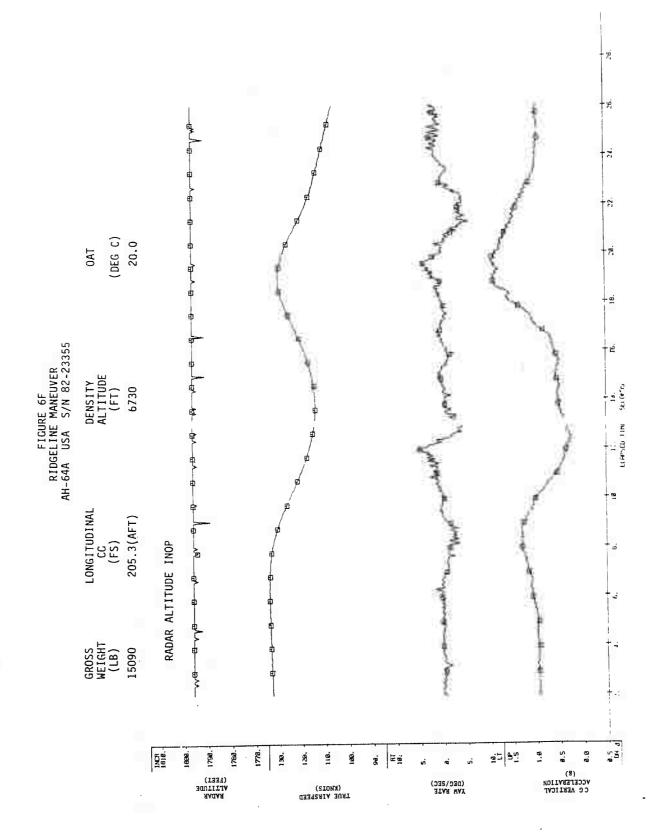












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